

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of playing a parimutuel betting game between a plurality of players, the parimutuel betting game based on events unfolding during a determinate sporting event, such as a trivia game, a principal objective of the game being to acquire the largest number of betting tokens by the end of the sporting event, wherein the players are in direct competition because payoffs are parimutuel style, comprising:

allocating betting tokens to each of the players,

conducting a plurality of betting events, each said betting event based on a bettable event occurring during said determinate sporting event, each said step of conducting a betting event comprising:

selecting a betting event from said bettable events;

administering at least one betting line for said betting event, each said step of administering a betting line comprising:

opening a betting line for said betting event, said betting line based on a finite set of possible outcomes of said betting event;

allowing the players to selectively bet tokens on said possible outcomes of said betting event;

freezing tokens bet on said open line such that said frozen tokens are not available for further betting until a payoff has been made on said betting event;

closing said betting line after a selected interval such that no further tokens may be bet on said line;

terminating said betting event; and

upon termination of said betting event, paying off winners of each said betting line in said betting event in parimutuel style.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising allocating bonus tokens to each said open betting line to thereby encourage the players to bet on said open line, said bonus tokens being paid to winners of said betting line in parimutuel style.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein for each said betting event, only one betting line is open at any given time, to thereby encourage the players to bet on a given betting line before said betting line closes.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein a new betting line is opened substantially whenever a prior betting line closes, to thereby constantly challenge the players to evaluate an open betting line within said betting event.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the players can place multiple bets on any open betting line.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising allocating additional tokens to each of the players at selected intervals during the game.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein each of the players receive an equal amount of said additional tokens.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of said betting events has a hierarchal parimutuel style payoff tree structure, said hierarchical parimutuel style payoff tree structure comprising:

said hierarchical betting event having at least two primary outcomes,

at least one of said primary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event having at least two secondary outcomes, such that whenever one of said secondary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said primary outcomes is also a winning bet, and

wherein winning bets placed on said secondary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said primary outcomes.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein at least one of said secondary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event has at least two tertiary outcomes, such that whenever one of said tertiary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said secondary outcomes and one of said primary outcomes are also a winning bet, and

wherein winning bets placed on said tertiary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said secondary outcomes.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein at least one of said tertiary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event has at least two quaternary outcomes, such that whenever one of said quaternary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said tertiary outcomes, one of said secondary outcomes, and one of said primary outcomes are also a winning bet, and

wherein winning bets placed on said quaternary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said tertiary outcomes.

11. The method of claim 8, wherein each said hierarchical payoff in said hierarchical betting event is $share(n, \ell_m)$ determined through step-wise application of a recursive algorithm to said hierarchical payoff tree structure, said recursive algorithm being

$$share(n, \ell_k) = [share(n, \ell_{k-1}) [subbets(\ell_k) + Bonus(\ell_k)]] [bets(\ell_{k-1}) + subbets(\ell_{k-1}) + Bonus(\ell_{k-1})] + wager(n, \ell_k)$$

wherein

ℓ_k is the outcome whose sub-outcome is ℓ_{k-1} ,

k takes values $1, 2, 3 \dots m$,

m is the number of branches outcome ℓ_0 is from a base of the hierarchical payoff tree

5 structure,

ℓ_0 is the winning outcome that is a leaf of the hierarchical payoff tree structure,

n = player placing bet,

$subbets(\ell_k)$ = total number of tokens bet on subbets of ℓ_k ,

$bets(\ell_k)$ = total tokens bet on ℓ_k itself,

10 $wager(n, \ell_k)$ = total tokens bet on ℓ_k by player n ,

$share(n, \ell_0) = wager(n, \ell_0)$, and

$Bonus(\ell) = \text{bonus}(\ell)$ if $subbet(\ell) > 0$, and 0 if $subbet(\ell) = 0$.

12. The method of claim 1, further comprising a means for determining payoffs for hierarchical choice sets that retains the flavor of a parimutuel style.

15 13. The method of claim 1, wherein the players pay money to a gambling establishment in exchange for said allocation of tokens.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said gambling establishment retains a percentage of tokens bet on said betting lines.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein each said betting event is a Trivia Event Betting Line.

20 16. The method of claim 1, wherein some of said betting events are Trivia Event Betting Lines and some of said betting events are Viewed Event Betting Lines.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein some of said Viewed Event Betting Lines are

determinate.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein some of said Viewed Event Betting Lines are indeterminate.

19. A computerized method of playing a parimutuel betting game between a plurality of players, said parimutuel betting game based on events unfolding during a determinate sporting event, such as a trivia game, a principal objective of the game being to acquire the largest number of betting tokens by the end of the sporting event, wherein the players are in direct competition with each other because each player's winnings come from other players' losses, the game being administered by an administrator, comprising:

providing a host processor, said host processor programmed for analyzing and processing input data and outputting data and information relevant to the parimutuel betting game;

interactively connecting a plurality of player processors to said host processor, said player processors programmed for playing the parimutuel betting game, each said player processor having a display means operatively associated therewith for displaying data received from said host processor and for entering data and sending data to said host processor;

interactively connecting an administrative processor to said player processors via said host processor, said administrative processor programmed for administering the parimutuel betting game, said administrative processor having a display means operatively associated therewith for displaying data received from said host processor and for entering data and sending data to said host processor;

displaying an administrator browser page on said display means of said administrative processor;

displaying a player browser page on said display means of each said player processor;
using said processors to allocate betting tokens to each of the players prior to
commencement of said sporting event;

5 the administrator monitoring said sporting event for situations giving rise to bettable
events;

the players and the administrator using said browser pages and said processors to conduct
a plurality of betting events, each said betting event based on a bettable event occurring during
said sporting event, each said step of conducting a betting event comprising:

10 the administrator selecting a betting event from said bettable events;
administering at least one betting line for said betting event, each said step of
administering a betting line comprising:

the administrator using said administrative browser page to open a betting line for
said betting event, said betting line based on a finite set of possible
outcomes of said betting event;

15 upon the administrator opening a new betting line, said administrative processor
sending a betting line identifier and a bonus amount for said new line to
said host processor;

upon receiving said betting line identifier for said new line, said host processor
opening a new betting line;

20 displaying betting event information for said open betting line on said display
means of said player processors,

allowing the players an amount of time within which to use said player browser

pages to selectively bet tokens on said possible outcomes of said betting event;

for each bet placed by a player on a betting line, sending data concerning said bet to said host computer for processing, said data including a player identification, a betting line identification, a betting choice identification, and an amount bet;

freezing tokens bet on said open betting line such that said frozen tokens are not available for further betting until a payoff has been made on said betting event;

displaying updated betting event information for each said betting line on said player browser pages;

the administrator closing said betting line after a selected interval such that no further tokens may be bet on said line;

upon the administrator closing said new line, said administrative processor sending said line identifier for said new line to said host processor;

upon receiving said betting line identifier, said host closing said new betting line such that no further bets can be placed on said line;

the administrator monitoring said sporting event until a termination event occurs with regard to said betting event;

terminating said betting event upon occurrence of said termination event for said betting event;

upon the administrator terminating said betting event for said new line, said

administrative processor sending said line identifier and a winning choice identification to said host processor for calculating said parimutuel payoff on said new line;

5 upon termination of each said betting event, paying off winners of each said betting line in said betting event in parimutuel style, said payoffs being determined and processed by said host processor;

performing updates on a periodic basis wherein said host processor sends data to all the player processors and said administrative processor reflecting changes to said browser pages; and

10 repeating said process of selectively conducting betting events until the sporting event has concluded.

20. The method of claim 19, further comprising, prior to a start of said game, said administrator selecting possible betting events to be used during the game, and

said administrator selecting bonus amounts to be awarded for each betting line in a given betting event.

15 21. The method of claim 19, wherein said displayed betting event information for each said betting line is selected from the group consisting of: betting line identification, bonus amount, betting choices in said line, total tokens bet on each betting choice in said line, number of tokens the player using said player processor has bet on each betting choice in said line, payoff odds, and status of betting line.

20 22. The method of claim 19, wherein said open and close functions are combined into a new line function, such that selecting said new line function closes said open line and opens a new line.

23. The method of claim 19, wherein a subset of the players may elect to play the parimutuel betting game in a private group consisting only of said subset of players, said private group being administered by the administrator.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein said private group selectively customizes a set of house rules for said private group prior to commencement of said sporting event.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein said customized house rules for said private group are selected via a captain's browser page on one of said remote terminals, said captain's browser page containing input fields for setting up said private game for said private group, said input fields of said captain's screen including a list of the players of said private group, a list of betting events, a default bonus size for said betting lines, and an allocation of tokens to be distributed to the players at selected points in the sporting event.

26. The method of claim 19, wherein said host processor simultaneously runs a plurality of parimutuel betting games, each of the parimutuel betting games being based on a separate sporting event, and

further comprising, for each of the parimutuel betting games, assigning identification numbers to the administrator for and the players of the game, said processor using said identification numbers to ensure that the players are linked to the appropriate administrator of that particular game.

27. The method of claim 19, wherein said host processor, said player processor, and said administrative processor interact via the Internet.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein at least some of said player processors are connected to said host processor via a wireless Internet connection means.

29. The method of claim 19, further comprising allocating bonus tokens to each said open betting line to thereby encourage the players to bet on said open line, said bonus tokens being paid to winners of said betting line in parimutuel style such that bonus tokens on said line are allocated among said winners according to each said winner's proportion of winning bets on said line

30. The method of claim 19, wherein for each said betting event, only one betting line is open at any given time, to thereby encourage the players to bet on a given betting line before said betting line closes.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein a new betting line is opened substantially whenever a prior betting line closes, to thereby constantly challenge the players to evaluate an open betting line within said betting event.

32. The method of claim 19, wherein each of the players can place multiple bets on any open betting line.

33. The method of claim 19, further comprising allocating additional tokens to each of the players at selected intervals during the game.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein each of the players receive an equal amount of said additional tokens.

35. The method of claim 19, wherein at least one of said betting events has a hierarchal parimutuel style payoff tree structure, said hierarchical parimutuel style payoff tree structure comprising:

said hierarchical betting event having at least two primary outcomes,

at least one of said primary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event having at least

two secondary outcomes, such that whenever one of said secondary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said primary outcomes is also a winning bet, and

wherein winning bets placed on said secondary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said primary outcomes.

5 36. The method of claim 35, wherein at least one of said secondary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event has at least two tertiary outcomes, such that whenever one of said tertiary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said secondary outcomes and one of said primary outcomes are also a winning bet, and

10 wherein winning bets placed on said tertiary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said secondary outcomes.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein at least one of said tertiary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event has at least two quaternary outcomes, such that whenever one of said quaternary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said tertiary outcomes, one of said secondary outcomes, and one of said primary outcomes are also a winning bet, and

15 wherein winning bets placed on said quaternary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said tertiary outcomes.

38. The method of claim 35, wherein each said hierarchical payoff in said hierarchical betting event is $share(n, \ell_m)$ determined through step-wise application of a recursive algorithm to said hierarchical payoff tree structure, said recursive algorithm being

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$$share(n, \ell_k) = [share(n, \ell_{k-1}) [subbets(\ell_k) + Bonus(\ell_k)]] [bets(\ell_{k-1}) + subbets(\ell_{k-1}) + Bonus(\ell_{k-1})] + wager(n, \ell_k)$$

wherein

ℓ_k is the outcome whose sub-outcome is ℓ_{k-1} ,

k takes values $1, 2, 3 \dots m$,

m is the number of branches outcome ℓ_0 is from a base of the hierarchical payoff tree structure,

5 ℓ_0 is the winning outcome that is a leaf of the hierarchical payoff tree structure,

n = player placing bet,

$subbets(\ell_k)$ = total number of tokens bet on subbets of ℓ_k ,

$bets(\ell_k)$ = total tokens bet on ℓ_k itself,

$wager(n, \ell_k)$ = total tokens bet on ℓ_k by player n ,

10 $share(n, \ell_0) = wager(n, \ell_0)$, and

$Bonus(\ell) = bonus(\ell)$ if $subbet(\ell) > 0$, and 0 if $subbet(\ell) = 0$.

39. The method of claim 19, further comprising a means for determining payoffs for hierarchical choice sets that retains the flavor of a parimutuel style.

40. The method of claim 19, wherein said selected sporting event is a trivia game.

15 41. The method of claim 19, wherein the players pay money to a gambling establishment in exchange for said allocation of tokens.

42. The method of claim 41, wherein said gambling establishment retains a percentage of tokens bet on said betting lines.

43. The method of claim 19, wherein each said betting event is a Trivia Event Betting Line.

20 44. The method of claim 19, wherein some of said betting events are Trivia Event Betting Lines and some of said betting events are Viewed Event Betting Lines.

45. The method of claim 44, wherein some of said Viewed Event Betting Lines are

determinate.

46. The method of claim 44, wherein some of said Viewed Event Betting Lines are indeterminate.

47. A system for playing a parimutuel betting game between a plurality of players, the
5 parimutuel betting game based on events unfolding during a determinate sporting event, such as a trivia game, a principal objective of the game being to acquire the largest number of betting tokens by the end of the sporting event, wherein the players are in direct competition with each other because each player's winnings come from other players' losses, the game being administered by an administrator, comprising:

10 a host processor programmed for analyzing and processing input data and outputting data and information relevant to the parimutuel betting game;

a plurality of player processors interactively connected to said host processor, said player processors programmed for playing the parimutuel betting game;

15 an administrative processor interactively connected to said player processors via said host processor, said administrative processor programmed for administering the game based on input from the administrator;

a display means operatively associated with each said player processor for displaying data received from said host processor, and for entering data and sending data to said host processor;

20 a display means operatively associated with each said administrative processor for displaying data received from said host processor, and for entering data and sending data to said host processor,

said processors programmed to:

allocate betting tokens to each said player processor;

open and conduct a plurality of betting events, each said betting event based on a bettable
event occurring during said sporting event, said betting events being selectable by
5 the administrator;

open a plurality of betting lines for each said bettable events, each said betting line based
on a finite set of possible outcomes of said betting event, said betting lines being
selectable by the administrator;

receive and process bets of tokens placed by the players on said possible outcomes of
10 said betting event on each betting line opened during the game;

freeze tokens bet on each said open line such that said frozen tokens are not available for
further betting until a payoff has been made on said betting event;

close each said open betting line after a selected interval, said interval being selected by
the administrator, such that no further tokens may be bet on said line;

15 terminate said betting event upon occurrence of a termination event for said betting
event;

upon termination of said betting event, pay off winners of each said betting line in said
betting event in parimutuel style.

48. The system of claim 47, wherein said host processor includes an interrupt processing
20 means for processing interrupts received from said processors, said interrupts being selected
from the group consisting of update, bet, open, close, and terminate.

49. The system of claim 47, further comprising

said host processor having a web server means for downloading interface screens to said player processors and said administrative processor;

said host processor having a bookkeeping means for processing all bookkeeping functions required by said host processor;

5 said host processor having a parimutuel betting game database means for holding login information for each of the players; and

said host processor having a real-time processing loop means for supplying socket-based real time communications between said player processors, said administrative processor, and said bookkeeping means.

10 50. The system of claim 47, further comprising said processors programmed to allocate bonus tokens to each said open betting line to thereby encourage the players to bet on said open line, said bonus tokens being paid to winners of said betting line in parimutuel style such that bonus tokens on said line are allocated among said winners according to each said winner's proportion of winning bets on said line.

15 51. The system of claim 47, further comprising said processors programmed to conduct only one open betting line at a time in each conducted betting event, to thereby encourage the players to bet on a given betting line before said betting line closes.

20 52. The system of claim 51, wherein a new betting line is opened substantially whenever a prior betting line closes, to thereby constantly challenge the players to evaluate an open betting line within said betting event.

53. The system of claim 47, wherein each of the players can place multiple bets on any open betting line.

54. The system of claim 47, further comprising allocating additional tokens to each of the players at selected intervals during the game.

55. The system of claim 54, wherein each of the players receive an equal amount of said additional tokens.

56. The system of claim 47, wherein at least one of said betting events has a hierarchal parimutuel style payoff tree structure, said hierarchical parimutuel style payoff tree structure comprising:

said hierarchical betting event having at least two primary outcomes,

at least one of said primary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event having at least two secondary outcomes, such that whenever one of said secondary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said primary outcomes is also a winning bet, and

wherein winning bets placed on said secondary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said primary outcomes.

57. The system of claim 56, wherein at least one of said secondary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event has at least two tertiary outcomes, such that whenever one of said tertiary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said secondary outcomes and one of said primary outcomes are also a winning bet, and

wherein winning bets placed on said tertiary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said secondary outcomes.

58. The system of claim 57, wherein at least one of said tertiary outcomes in said hierarchical betting event has at least two quaternary outcomes, such that whenever one of said quaternary outcomes is a winning bet, one of said tertiary outcomes, one of said secondary outcomes, and

one of said primary outcomes are also a winning bet, and

wherein winning bets placed on said quaternary outcomes receive a higher parimutuel style payoff than winning bets placed on said tertiary outcomes.

59. The system of claim 57, wherein each said hierarchical payoff in said hierarchical betting event is $share(n, \ell_m)$ determined through step-wise application of a recursive algorithm to said hierarchical payoff tree structure, said recursive algorithm being

$$share(n, \ell_k) = [share(n, \ell_{k-1}) [subbets(\ell_k) + Bonus(\ell_k)]] [bets(\ell_{k-1}) + subbets(\ell_{k-1}) + Bonus(\ell_{k-1})] + wager(n, \ell_k)$$

10 wherein

ℓ_k is the outcome whose sub-outcome is ℓ_{k-1} ,

k takes values $1, 2, 3 \dots m$,

m is the number of branches outcome ℓ_0 is from a base of the hierarchical payoff tree structure,

15 ℓ_0 is the winning outcome that is a leaf of the hierarchical payoff tree structure,

n = player placing bet,

$subbets(\ell_k)$ = total number of tokens bet on subbets of ℓ_k ,

$bets(\ell_k)$ = total tokens bet on ℓ_k itself,

$wager(n, \ell_k)$ = total tokens bet on ℓ_k by player n ,

20 $share(n, \ell_0) = wager(n, \ell_0)$, and

$Bonus(\ell) = bonus(\ell)$ if $subbet(\ell) > 0$, and 0 if $subbet(\ell) = 0$.

60. The system of claim 47, further comprising a means for determining payoffs for hierarchical choice sets that retains the flavor of a parimutuel style.

61. The system of claim 47, wherein the players pay money to a gambling establishment in exchange for said allocation of tokens.

62. The system of claim 61, wherein said gambling establishment retains a percentage of tokens bet on said betting lines.

5 63. The method of claim 47, wherein at least some of said lines open at random points in time so as to add uncertainty as to when a line will close and thereby provide an incentive to place bets early in a given betting line.

64. The method of claim 47, wherein each said betting event is a Trivia Event Betting Line.

65. The method of claim 47, wherein some of said betting events are Trivia Event Betting
10 Lines and some of said betting events are Viewed Event Betting Lines.

66. The method of claim 65, wherein some of said Viewed Event Betting Lines are determinate.

67. The method of claim 65, wherein some of said Viewed Event Betting Lines are indeterminate.